domestic procurement of permitted items in terms of Department of Revenue notification issued for procurement from domestic sources.

Low patent approvals

1254. SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

whether it is a fact that patent approvals from our Patent Office is very low in the last four years;

if so, the details of approved patents, product-wise, country-wise, patent-holder-wise for the period mentioned above; and

the reasons for minimum level of patent approvals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL POLICY AND PROMOTION, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR): (a) and (b) The number of the patents granted by the Indian Patent Office during the last four years has been showing a rising trend as under:

	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08 (Up to 29.02.2008)
Patents Granted	1,911	4,320	7,539	10,769

Government has taken various measures to facilitate and encourage more patent filings and approvals.

The details about granted patents are periodically published in the Journal of the Patent Office, which is a public document available on the website of the Patent Office, namely, *http://www. ipindia. nic. in.*

(c) Does not arise.

Retail trade by Multinational and corporate houses

1255. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

whether it is a fact that Multinational Companies and big corporate houses are allowed to enter into retail trade;

did the Government work out its impact on small traders;

has the Government worked out some norms and rules for establishing big Malls and retail stores;

the details of these norms; and

if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL POLICY AND PROMOTION, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR): (a) As per the extant policy, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is not permitted in retail trade except in single brand product retailing. There is no restriction on the entry of big corporate houses and other domestic investors into the retail sector.